

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

- C1
1. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) A design data processing method of processing hierarchically configured design data, comprising:
 - obtaining first design data of a ~~predetermined~~lower rank of hierarchy;
 - obtaining second design data of a rank of hierarchy higher than the ~~predetermined~~lower rank of hierarchy, after the obtaining the first design data; and
 - combining the second design data to the first design data.
 - 2-4. (CANCELED)
 5. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) A computer readable recording medium storing a software program for processing hierarchically configured design data, which when executed by a computer, cause the computer to perform operations comprising:
 - obtaining first design data of a ~~predetermined~~lower rank of hierarchy;
 - obtaining second design data of a rank of hierarchy higher than the ~~predetermined~~lower rank of hierarchy, after the obtaining the first design data; and
 - combining the second design data to the first design data.
 - 6-8. (CANCELED)
 9. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) A method of designing a hierarchical layout of a circuit, comprising:
 - receiving a designation of a ~~specified~~lower rank from a user;
 - retrieving design data of the ~~specified~~lower rank from a storage unit;
 - retrieving wiring data of an upper rank from the storage unit, after the retrieving the design data;
 - setting the wiring data in the design data; and
 - displaying the design data in which the wiring data has been set on a display unit.

BEST AVAILABLE COPY